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1878
1879
1880
1881
1882
1883
1884
1885
1886
1887
1888
1889
1890
1891
1892
1893
1894
1895
1896
1897
1898
1899
1900



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THE RED SPY.

A TALE OF THE MOHAWK IN 1777.

BY P. HAMILTON MYERS,
AUTHOR OF POCKET NOVEL No. 105, "NICK DOYLE."

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THE RED SPY.

CHAPTER I.

PATRIOT AND TRAITOR.

It was in the twilight of a calm July evening in 1777, that two young men, lightly clad, and each bearing a rifle, might have been seen loitering upon the banks of the Mohawk, at a point, near to what is now a large and populous town.

Although at first sight, the casual observer would have taken them for sportsmen in pursuit of game, a little closer observation would have convinced him that such was not the case, but that their arms were carried only as part of a habitual system of precaution in those troublous times, when no man knew at what moment he might stumble upon a deadly foe.

Charles Dudley, and Enoch Walden were citizens of one neighborhood, and had been acquaintances from boyhood. They were not, however, and had never been friends. There was no approach to congeniality in their dispositions, the first being frank and generous, while the other was characterized by qualities in every respect, the reverse of these noble traits. They had met by accident, and stopped to exchange such few words of constrained civility, as people are wont to

utter, who, while they entertain for each other a secret dislike, are still willing to avoid an open quarrel. But the deportment of Walden was marked with a sort of obsequiousness to his companion, which might have indicated to one less suspicious than Dudley, some sinister design.

1 “Stirring times are these,” he said, glancing at his weapon, after a moment’s pause in the conversation. “It becomes one to look well to flint and flask.”

“It does indeed,” replied Dudley. “I hope there have been no massacres committed.”

“I don’t know exactly about the *massacres*,” said Walden, emphasizing the word. “Indians have *their* way of fighting, and we have *ours*. But there certainly *was* a night attack made at Shell’s Bush, night before last, and houses burnt, lives lost, and prisoners taken, as usual.”

“This is fearful intelligence, Mr. Walden, and, what is worse, we know not at what hour the bolt may fall upon us. You will, of course, join the Life Guard, which we are organizing?”

“I intend to join quite a different service, I assure you,” said Walden, “and one in which a little more honor and profit can be gained than in guarding a few old women and their spinning-wheels. Colonel St. Leger is now on his approach to Fort Stanwix, and under his banner I shall enlist, without delay. Nay, hear me,” he said, as the withering scorn which had gathered on the face of his companion, indicated a scathing rebuke. “St. Leger will reduce Fort Stanwix in three days. With the aid of the loyalists in this country, the rebellion in this section is sure to be immediately quelled, with little or no bloodshed. Intelligence from the south and east, is equally favorable

to the royal cause. If, therefore, you desire to favor your country effectually, Dudley, be persuaded to go with me. The most brilliant inducements are held out, and for you in particular, influential, and brave, a commission is certain—I may say, indeed, that I am authorized to offer it, by those who have the full confidence of St. Leger.”

“Enough has been said,” replied Dudley, with dignity, “let us part while our blood is cool. Go, join St. Leger, to devastate your native land, or join, if you prefer, the savage brigade, or their more savage allies, whose atrocities you palliate. When *we* meet again, it will be as enemies.” Thus saying, he turned to depart.

“Hold!” exclaimed the other, snatching his rifle, as if he would enforce attention. “We are enemies, *now!*”

Stung by resentment, and maddened by the thought that his plans had been prematurely and uselessly disclosed, his eye now gleamed with undisguised rage. That still another element entered into his wrath, became evident by his words: “We are enemies, *now,*” he repeated, “and I have a warning to bestow. You have had thoughts of Miss Welles. She is mine, affianced and plighted by her father, who, with me, is about to join the royal standard. See to it, that my rights are regarded. Any invasion of them, in that quarter, will be visited by punishment, summary, and condign.” He tapped his weapon significantly, as he concluded.

Dudley’s eyes flashed with anger.

“Do you mean to threaten *me?*” he said, laying hold of his companion’s rifle with a firm grasp. “Me, who know you, Enoch Warden, to be as cowardly as perfid-

dious? If you *are* affianced to Ellen Welles, it is because her pure heart has never detected your baseness. But words between us are useless. I leave, however, no armed foe in my rear." So saying, he wrested the weapon of the other suddenly from his grasp, discharged its contents in the air, and flinging it upon the ground, disappeared in the forest.

Mortified and infuriated, Walden gave utterance to some muttered imprecations, and then, having recovered and reloaded his gun, rapidly departed in an **opposite direction.**

CHAPTER II.

THE FORT.

We are apt, when dwelling in the sunshine of peace, to look upon the season of war as one of unmitigated horror. We forget that man is powerless, effectually, to mar the fair face of Nature, or intercept the smiles of Heaven.

We forget that the fields still are verdant, the streams still sparkling, the sunlit canopy by day, and the starry firmament at night—still beautiful and sublime, amidst all the puny tempests of human strife. The mind, too, buoyant and elastic with hope, and containing within itself the secret springs of joy, bids defiance at times to every peril, and often seems least desponding, when dangers and trials are the most numerous and severe.

The twilight had gradually disappeared, and the moon, riding high in the heavens, was illuming the landscape, as Dudley pursued his homeward way. Hill, dale, and stream, bathed in a flood of silvery light, lay spread around him, as far as the eye could reach, and for awhile engrossed his undivided attention. But sadder themes soon pressed upon his mind. The massacre at Shell's Bush, of which Walden had so unfeelingly spoken, was one of many similar deeds, which had already been perpetrated in the Valley of the Mohawk.

They were the work of savages, aided and instigated by some of the lowest and vilest of the white inhabi-

tants, who, having declared in favor of the royal cause, made it a cover for the perpetration of every enormity which either private revenge, or the most sordid cupidity could dictate. Although these atrocities usually occurred, and were most to be dreaded in the darker nights, they were by no means confined to such seasons; the full light of the moon, and the broad glare of day, affording no protection to the feeble inhabitants, when the war spirit of their savage foes was fully aroused. On again viewing the sky, Dudley beheld a belt of dense clouds skirting the western horizon, from which detached fragments were occasionally ascending zenithward, threatening, ere long, to obscure the whole firmament, and he shuddered as he thought that perhaps some fearful tragedy might be enacted upon that very night.

Nor were these apprehensions his only source for inquiet. Other griefs, of a private and selfish nature, also engaged his attention. The claim made by Walden to the affections of Miss Welles, although little worthy of credit, was not without its effect upon his mind. It had revealed to him the state of his own feelings, of which he had been before scarcely conscious, and, at the same time, had conjured up phantoms of obstacles to his hopes, which, with all a lover's variableness of feeling, at one moment seemed shadowy, and at the next, insuperable. Ellen Welles was a lady well calculated to inspire affection in such a heart as Dudley's. The ordinary charms of youth and beauty were enhanced in her person, by a natural grace of manner, and an unalloyed sweetness of temper. If a judgment, just and discriminating, was necessary to prevent such a character from degenerating into insipidity, that gift, also, was Ellen's. Her father was a

military man, and had held a captain's commission under Sir William Johnson in the war of 1756. He had purchased, at the close of the contest, a large estate in Tryon County, which the advancing settlement of that country had rendered highly valuable, and at the period now spoken of, was what, in more modern parlance, would be termed a large land proprietor.

It was no matter of surprise to Dudley, that Captain Welles should have again offered his services to the crown; but he wondered much what provision he had made for the security of Ellen, who was an only child, and who had long before been deprived of her other parent. But had he been disposed, he might have solved his curiosity by a direct appeal to the object of it; for Ellen Welles at that moment stood before him. She was accompanied by a single domestic, who bore a few articles of value in his hand; and her deportment gave token of alarm and agitation. Her answers to his hasty inquiries were exactly what he expected to hear. Her father was absent from home; there were rumors of expected attacks from the Indians, and she was hastening to place herself under the protection of a neighboring family; for, although Captain Welles was well known to be loyal in his sentiments, his house was too secluded, and presented too many temptations to the plunderers, to be a safe abode for an unprotected female.

That Dudley at once became her escort, and that he strove at once to soothe her alarm, although far from considering it unfounded, and that he promised such protection as he could give, were quite matters of course.

On arriving at the house which Ellen had selected for refuge, its inmates were found to be in a state of

alarm nearly equal to her own. The intelligence of the expected attack had spread like wildfire through the whole community, where the merciless character of these onslaughts was well understood. The owner of the house, Mr. Lee, who was a well-known patriot, was, together with his sons, busily engaged in making such hasty preparations for defence as the time allowed. Doors and windows were barricaded, ammunition prepared, and weapons put in order, with all that bustling activity which such an emergency might well be supposed to create. The panic in the vicinity had become general, and several others of the immediate neighbors, whose houses were considered less defensible than Lee's, were soon seen flocking to his little fort, with their arms and ammunition, and such of their more valuable effects as they could conveniently transport. Lee's reputation as a bold and resolute man contributed not a little to produce this result, although it might be considered a very questionable prudence, which sought shelter under a roof, rendered, by the very reputation of its owner, so prominent an object of hostility. The work of defence now went rapidly forward. A breastwork of logs was soon thrown up in front of the house, and another opposite the postern door; and upon the roof of the building, blankets, saturated with water, were spread, as a protection from that most formidable engine of Indian warfare, the firebrand.

Dudley having become convinced of the reality of the danger, hastened to summon to Lee's such other of the neighbors as did not choose rather to seek the shelter of the forest, being conscious that their chief hope of safety must consist in thus consolidating their strength. He had no immediate friends in the vicinity

to awaken his solicitude, and was able to act the more efficiently for the whole. With many injunctions to regard his own safety, and one from a voice, which he fondly fancied to be Ellen's, he departed on his mission. He found the neighborhood everywhere alarmed. Some were secreting their effects, preparatory to flight; some were barricading their premises, determined to die, if necessary, on their own hearthstone; and others, in small bands, were fleeing to the forests, bearing their children in their arms, and upholding the tottering steps of the sick and the aged. The scene was one to draw tears from the stoutest hearts, but the necessity of speedy action left little room for contemplation. Dudley had a word of hope and encouragement for all, and although numbers gladly accepted his proposals, and hastened to accompany him, the majority preferred to trust to the hiding-places of the wilderness. He was more successful, however, in gaining refugees, than recruits. Women and children would add but little to the effective force of the garrison, and he was, therefore, not a little delighted at the accession to his numbers of four or five members of the half-organized band, bearing the imposing title of the Life Guard. These were all young men, well-armed, and, by the presence and peril of those most dear to them, furnished with the loftiest incentive to action.

CHAPTER III.

A N A R R O W E S C A P E .

The little company were soon assembled, and set out together for their temporary fortress. The strictest silence was enjoined, it being impossible to tell how near the enemy might be, or where his advanced scouts might be met. This precaution did not prove superfluous, for they were yet a third of a mile distant from Lee's, when they received convincing proof of their danger. The silence was suddenly broken by a tremendous war-whoop; shouts and shots echoed through the air, and soon the kindling light of a deserted farm-house revealed the exulting foe, flitting like fiends around the tenement, from which they expected soon to see their victims issue.

Appalled by the fearful spectacle, the little party paused and remained for a while, breathless spectators of the scene.

The relative positions of the fugitives, the foe, and the Fort, (for such we must designate the dwelling of Lee,) were about as the extremities of an equal sided to each other.

The latter could not be gained without emerging from the woods, and crossing a considerable space of cleared land, which was an undertaking too hazardous to contemplate.

Resuming their route, therefore, with the greatest precaution, they obtained the nearest position to Lee's

that the cover of the forest would permit, hoping thence to pass unperceived across the intervening space, which had now become diminished to about thirty rods.

But at this moment, the enemy, after an impotent howl of rage at finding the burning house unoccupied, took up their march. With frantic gesticulations, some bearing lighted firebrands, and others brandishing their knives, they bent their course, as had been apprehended, directly toward the Fort. But perceiving some signs of defence, they made a *detour* around the premises, in a course which threatened to bring them almost to the concealed party.

To remain in the most perfect silence was deemed safer than any attempt at retreat, before the quick eye and ear of the savages. The available portion of Dudley's force, consisting of seven armed men, obeying the whispered orders of their leader, stood with presented arms, ready, in case of discovery, to discharge a sudden volley upon the enemy, and then, by virtue of the panic which such an assault would create, either to cut their way through the foe to the Fort, or make a rapid retreat, as circumstances would dictate. Dudley, by general consent, had been invested with entire command. As the savages drew nearer, they were perceived to be about sixty in number—including, perhaps, ten or twelve whites, who, having adopted the dress and habits of their confederates, may justly be considered as entitled also to their appellation. With glistening knives, with glaring brands, with exulting shouts, they came nearer, until their advance was scarcely a dozen yards distant from the hidden encampment. Here they suddenly paused, and seemed to hold a consultation.

It was a moment of fearful suspense. Trembling children cowered closer to their terrified parents, and with eyes upraised, faithfully obeyed the oft-repeated signs of silence. The pause was but momentary; but at the instant of renewing their march, one of the concealed company, unfortunately, gave utterance to a slight ejaculation of delight, which, catching the quick ear of the Indian leader, produced a second halt. Pointing to the woods, and assuming a listening attitude for a moment, he thus communicated to his followers the nature of his suspicions. A scout was immediately detached to examine the suspected cover, but watchful eyes and active hands awaited his approach. He directed his course at once to the encampment, but with such rapid and incautious steps, that before perceiving the ambush, he was at the side of Dudley—he had advanced to meet him.

The expressive “huh!” rose faintly to his lips, as the firm grasp of the youth encircled his throat, while the silent knife completed his task, and the dying Indian was upheld, lest his fall should be heard. The savages, after a minute or so, hearing no alarm, slowly resumed their course, not doubting that their emissary would soon overtake them. They pursued their circuitous way about the house of Lee, evidently calculating their safest plan of attack.

Nothing can be more cowardly than this mode of Indian warfare, in which the assailants scarcely consider themselves victorious unless they succeed without losing a single warrior. As they approached the opposite side of the circle, the time had evidently arrived when, if at all, the fugitives were to emerge from their concealment, and make a rush for the Fort. To remain longer in the forest, which the Indian scouts

would soon be traversing in every direction, would be eminently perilous, and, with a word of encouragement, Dudley put his little company in motion. Rapidly advancing, they had safely crossed nearly half the intervening distance, when a sudden commotion in the ranks of the foe, showed they were perceived. A shout and a rush, with such speed as Indians only can accomplish, followed their discovery.

The fugitives, it will be remembered, were now about fifteen rods from the house, and the savages twice that distance, in a nearly opposite direction. The race was exciting, but not long doubtful. The enemy were still obliged to avoid too close a proximity to the house, and Dudley, halting with his little band of infantry, held them in check, until the women and children were out of danger, and then, still facing the foe with presented arms, they retreated into the Fort. Not a shot was fired.

CHAPTER IV.

A DARING EXPLOIT.

A piercing shriek, which met the ear of Dudley, upon his entrance, announced some new calamity.

A little boy, scarce two years old, had been lost in the confusion of the flight, and its mother, borne along by her impetuous companions, had been unable to make her vociferations understood until they reached the Fort.

Upbraiding herself, upbraiding her friends, and vainly struggling to escape from their grasp, and fly back to the rescue, the frantic parent rent every heart with her cries.

The moonlight still remaining unobscured, the infant, upon examination, was distinctly seen, about twelve rods distant, seated quietly upon the grass, and playing with the flowers, unconscious of danger. The discovery was made none too soon. An Indian, prone upon the ground, now lying motionless like a log, and now approaching the child with a slow and cat-like gait, was at the same instant discovered, while the whole band, at a safe distance, were silently watching his hazardous attempt. A dozen rifles were at once levelled at the miscreant, when Dudley interposed :

“For shame !” he said, “will you let one worthless dog draw your whole fire, and ensure the capture of

the child, while you are reloading? The game is Lee's by discovery, Rogers will stand ready to fire next, if necessary; and if both fail, leave the scoundrel to me!"

Uncle Lee, as he was familiarly called, smiled as he raised his unerring gun, and its quick report was accompanied by a yell, that seemed to proclaim the success of the shot. The Indian started from his recumbent position, and then fell heavily backward.

"If he were a Christian now, one might suppose him dead," exclaimed Rogers, who had watched the effect of Lee's shot with a look of chagrin, "but I have my doubts, Captain," he said, addressing Dudley, and raising his gun, beseechingly, "that fall was a little too theatrically."

"Don't you go to shooting dead men, Mr. Rogers," exclaimed Lee, "I tell you I've killed him."

Dudley, whose suspicions from the first, had been the same as those of Rogers, made a signal for the latter to fire, which he had no sooner done, than the dead man rose to his feet, with a screech that could not be misunderstood; then sinking gradually to his knees, he fell shivering to the ground, with indubitable signs of death.

Rogers smiled grimly, as he retorted upon his companion:

"'Tisn't much to *kill* an Indian, Mr. Lee; it's the bringing him to life again that shows the skill."

If any doubt had been entertained of the fatality of the last fire, the yell of wrath which arose from the Indians, and the volley which was discharged at the hapless infant, would have effectually dispelled them. But the distance which the cowardly assailants were com-

pelled to keep, and the minuteness of the mark, fortunately rendered their fire innocuous. It was evident, however, that the child, in so exposed a situation, could not long escape.

"It is a shame," exclaimed Dudley, "that a helpless babe should perish, and twelve strong men look idly on. I, myself, will save him."

Thus saying, he threw down his gun, that nothing might retard his speed, and prepared to rush out. But the firm grasp of Lee was upon his shoulder.

"'Tis certain death," said the old man; "you will be a mark for thirty rifles."

"And if it were thirty thousand, I would go," retorted Dudley, impetuously, and tearing himself away.

But at this moment a singular apparition entered the room, which, whether or not it was any thing more than a huge tin Dutch oven, surmounted by an inverted pail of the same material, was certainly nothing less. It required a little investigation to perceive signs of a human being under this extraordinary coat of mail, but in a moment more a familiar voice proceeding from the kettle, proclaimed a well-known slave of Lee's, by the name of Nands. Merely announcing his object, the faithful negro darted out of the house, and, presenting his shielded side to the enemy, ran hastily toward the child. There was one moment of fearful suspense, a yell, a volley and a responsive shout of derision from the slave. At the next moment, Nands bent over the wondering child, thrust him hastily within the capacious shield, and, rushing rapidly back, reached the house in safety. The cordial greeting, the welcome grasp, the wet eyes, and

the warm outpourings of a mother's gratitude, that here encountered him, astounded and bewildered the heroic African, while the marred and battered utensil told eloquently the tale of his danger and daring.

CHAPTER V.

THE BATTLE ON THE ROOF.

The event most desirable for the savages, and for which they had probably been waiting, now unfortunately occurred. The heavy drifting clouds, which had long blackened the western horizon, began now to obscure the whole sky, and a thick darkness soon settled upon the landscape. To fire the building and compel its evacuation, and thus to capture or massacre the whole party, while its defenders had no advantage of shelter, and were impeded with the care of their women and children, was the chivalrous feat which the besiegers now contemplated.

The danger could not be concealed, and hope consisted only in meeting it courageously. In a momentary interview which Dudley obtained at this period with Miss Welles, the latter communicated to him the dreadful suspicion that one of the leaders of the enemy was Enoch Walden, whom she believed she had recognized both by his figure and gait.

Although horrified at the supposition, there was also a gleam of pleasure in the announcement; for, whether Walden were so deeply guilty or not, the fact that he could be obnoxious to such a suspicion of Ellen precluded the idea of her entertaining for him any partial feeling. Animated by an increased hope, Dudley begged Ellen to consider herself under his especial

protection, and, with an earnest and eloquent look, he added, not to believe herself in danger, while he continued to live. There was nothing in the words, but there must have been something in the manner of the speaker, to call the quick blood to the cheek of Ellen. Hurriedly thanking him, she turned away, and Dudley, with a comparatively light heart, hastened to prepare for further defence.

Placing two or three men at each of the windows, so as to command to some extent, every side of the house, he directed them to keep up a random fire, in hopes that the besiegers would be intimidated from a near approach. For a while, this plan seemed to succeed, and no sound of the foe being detected, the belief was entertained that they were effectually repulsed.

But the more wary were not disposed to such ready hope. The silence was too deep and ominous. Alarmed by the very quietude without, Dudley, after ordering increased vigilance on every side, announced his determination to ascend to the house-top, and called upon three or four of his most resolute companions to follow him. A small "sky-light" afforded means to effect this object, and with extreme silence and caution, Dudley ascended, only until his head had fully emerged into the open air. Pausing to reconnoitre the adjacent fields, his eye was immediately arrested by what at first seemed to be a few fire-flies flitting about the roof.

With a sudden and fearful suspicion, he remained motionless, and made a closer scrutiny. Feeling cautiously about him, he ascertained that the wetted blankets had been removed, and the conviction that the roof was already in possession of the savages, forced

itself upon his mind. His position was nearly at one extremity of the building, which was long and narrow, with a single chimney at the opposite end.

Peering earnestly through the thick darkness, he at length discovered part of the outline of several figures in a stooping attitude. The sound of breath, as of blowing embers, reached his ear from several quarters, and convinced him that the Indians were, at that moment, engaged in setting fire to the building. His prudence for the moment almost yielded to the quick feeling of rage which prompted him to rush headlong upon so diabolical a foe, but restraining his wrath, he immediately drew back, and communicated to his astounded companions the nature of his discovery.

His resolution was immediately taken. The skylight, which was gained only by moveable steps, would admit only of three persons standing within it, and having stationed that number of his little garrison at the foot of the steps with reserve guns, he called upon Lee and Rogers to follow him, and once more ascended with the same perfect silence as before. Rising until their shoulders were above the roof, the three remained standing motionless, with presented arms.

It was doubtless a hazardous experiment for the besieged party to wait for the kindled light of their own roof, to reveal the persons of their foes. But the importance of striking a single blow, and one that might deter the enemy from making an attack, overcame every other consideration. The dampened state of the shingles rendered the process of ignition slow, but at length, a faint, blue flame, made its appearance in the vicinity of the chimney, where a number of small fagots had been carefully inserted. Flickering with the

wind, now sinking, now rising, the unsteady blaze was guarded from the air, by both hands of a kneeling Indian, whose fiendish features, as he bent over the light, could be distinctly traced. Brighter and higher rose the blaze, and soon began to reveal the other objects in its immediate vicinity, while the place occupied by Dudley and his companions remained in impenetrable obscurity.

Brighter and higher still, until the alarmed inmates beneath saw the fire gleaming downward through the chinks of the unceiled roof.

But the time of action had arrived. Other faint lights now sprang up, and the savages, to the number of five, were distinctly visible, when Dudley, having exchanged signals with his men, in order to select their several victims, quietly gave the command to fire. The report of the guns, and the death-screach of the Indians, was a mingled and simultaneous sound. They each rolled rapidly down the roof, and fell heavily to the ground. But although Dudley and his companions instantly handed down their guns, and received others in return, only one of the enemy remained visible, when they were again prepared to fire.

Running rapidly along the apex of the building, he had already gained hold of the rope, which, thrown lasso-like over the chimney, had been the means of his ascent, and was about to swing himself off when he received the contents of Dudley's gun. Still convulsively clutching the rope, he was seen by the now-growing light, to totter for a moment on the extreme end of the building, when Lee, more in pity than in wrath, gave him another ball.

"'Twould have been a hard fall for a living man," he said, as the noise of the body, striking the ground,

reached his ear. "But a stack of feather beds would not have been any mercy to him now."

"Don't be too sure," replied Rogers, banteringly, "*your* dead men have a remarkable faculty of coming to life again, and I think I see the red devil now, scampering across the field, with the rope in his hand!"

"And a piece of the chimney, I suppose," retorted Lee, who understood his comrade's propensity to joke too well to take offence.

But the triumph which produced this temporary elation of spirits in these brave men was far from being complete. The fire had gained a headway, that demanded instant attention, and whoever ventured within its light, would doubtless be a prominent mark for the outlying foe. No time, however, was to be lost, and two brave fellows of the Life Guard already stood prepared at the foot of the stairs, for the perilous enterprise. Bearing blankets, saturated as before, they rushed hastily to the flames. The expected volley was discharged, and unhappily, as the groans of the young men testified, not without effect.

One, but slightly injured, fled hastily back, while the other, convinced of the mortal danger of his wounds, nobly resolved that his life should prove no idle forfeit. Staunching the life-blood with one hand, he dragged himself feebly from blaze to blaze, until the last flickering light was extinguished, and then, with the remnant of his failing strength, crept slowly back to his companions. Drawn hastily, but gently within, the youth was deposited upon a couch, and hasty preparations were made to examine and relieve his wounds. But observing the changing expression of his face, and obeying his significant gestures to de-

sist, his companions crowded with tearful eyes around his bed.

"My sister!" faintly ejaculated the dying man, as he slowly turned his eyes toward the door. A low wail was heard without; the door opened, and the fainting maiden was supported to his bedside. A placid smile stole like sunlight over the features of the youth, his lips moved, and the trembling girl bent lower and lower to hear. The whispered words, with which the parting soul went upwards, were soft as sound could be; yet distinctly articulated, they fell upon every ear:

"We shall meet again!"

CHAPTER VI.

IN FORT STANWIX.

The effect upon the besieged party of the melancholy occurrence which has just been narrated, was dispiriting in the extreme. They could but feel that the lot of their comrade might soon be their own, and perhaps with circumstances of aggravated suffering. But Dudley was not without the strongest hopes, that the severe repulse which the enemy had now met with, would induce them entirely to withdraw, the more especially as they were not supposed to know the fatal result of their last discharge of fire-arms. The war-whoop with which they had accompanied their assault, gradually died away, and the utmost silence again prevailed without. Dudley continued to order occasional shots from the window, but they elicited no response.

The utmost vigilance was used, and every possible preventive measure employed, not omitting so serviceable an agent against a scaling foe as boiling water, a department of defence, under the especial superintendence of Nands. But these precautions, fortunately proved superfluous, and the night passed without further alarm. Baffled and mortified, the savages had retired, bearing with them the bodies of six of their fallen warriors, a loss which seemed to them of almost inappreciable magnitude.

Thus the gallant defence of "Fort Lee, the Less," as it was subsequently termed, proved not only the security of its inmates, with one lamentable exception, but for the time, at least, of the whole surrounding settlement.

Mutual congratulations on their escape, and devotional thanksgiving for so signal a protection of Providence, were among the earliest employments of the little party, on the ensuing morning.

But the panic that had spread through the neighborhood did not readily subside. Some, indeed, returned immediately to their homes, relying in part upon their private means of defence, but chiefly confident, from their knowledge of Indian character, that the enemy would not soon renew an enterprise which had proved so disastrous. A more vigilant police force was organized, and a portion of the citizens nightly acted as sentinels at all the prominent posts of observation.

To Ellen Welles, the events which have been recorded had been doubly terrifying, for a cause which has, as yet, been scarcely apparent.

Walden had in reality been a rejected claimant for her hand. His pretensions had been favored by her father, who, wrapped in his selfish and personal schemes, was so far from appreciating the worth of his daughter, as he was from penetrating the villainous character of her suitor. To him, during his temporary absence from home, Captain Welles had confided the charge of his household, enjoining Ellen, in case of danger, to appeal at once to his protection. And more recently still, Walden had been the bearer of a message to Ellen from her father, informing her that he was engaged in raising a company of volunteers, with which he

should immediately proceed, to join Colonel St. Leger, under the walls of Fort Stanwix. He further informed her that he had made suitable provisions for her safety during the perilous times that were like to ensue, and directed her to accept Walden's escort to the place where he was then sojourning.

Dreading his designs in relation to her detested suitor, yet fearing to disobey a parent, who, though harsh, was her only protector, she hesitated in most painful incertitude, as to her proper course of action.

But when the messenger proceeded to hint that he was empowered to enforce the commands of his principal, her terror knew no bounds. If she had before doubted, she was now decided, and she resolved to brave every other peril, sooner than to trust herself in the power of her suitor.

But she did not make known her resolution, and he, supposing her only to hesitate, specified an hour on the next day, when he would call for her decision, and courteously withdrew. It was on that evening that her flight to Lee's, impelled by a double fear, had occurred. But Walden had not, in reality, been a participant in the affair of the preceding night, and Ellen's suspicions on that point had doubtless been caused, in part, by the extreme dread of falling into his hands. It will be seen, therefore, that her alarm, although abated, was still far from being expelled, nor could she conceal her anxiety from Dudley. To express her gratitude to her defender with becoming warmth, and yet with maidenly reserve, was no difficult task for a sensible and ingenuous girl; but it was tremblingly, painfully, and by slow degrees that she was able to disclose, in reply to his earnest but re-

spectful inquiries, the other particulars of her unfortunate position.

Beautiful exceedingly did the timid girl appear as she related her griefs, and Dudley longed for nothing so much as to throw himself at her feet, and offer her a life-long protection. But with quick discernment he appreciated the unfitness of the occasion for any declaration of his feelings. It should be, he thought proudly, under other circumstances, when he was better entitled to ask, and she more free to refuse, that he would seek the hand and heart of one so peerless and pure. At present, it became his duty rather to make provisions for her safety, and on this subject he hastened to speak. He knew that small volunteer companies, in response to the earnest appeal of Colonel Gansevoort, were daily flocking to the relief of Fort Stanwix, and had learned, on inquiry, that one of these, *en route* for that military post, was hourly expected in the neighborhood. He at once proposed to her to take advantage of such an escort, to fly to the Fort, where she would find numbers of her own sex, who had sought the same refuge, and whence, if she should so desire, she could at any moment be transferred to her father, in the British camp. She could be attended, he said, by her maid, and he, himself, if she would permit, would accompany her, and fulfil an intention, that he had long entertained, of seeking service in the American Army. The proposition was startling, but Ellen did not hesitate. A favorite pony, which she was accustomed to ride, afforded her a convenient mode of travel, and means were readily found for the transportation of her domestics and their necessary baggage. Happier and prouder than a monarch, Dudley rode at the beauteous Ellen's side, encouraging her

by his confident and cheerful mien, and building for himself many a gorgeous air-castle, whose filmy foundations seemed firmer than the rock. The same evening beheld the whole party, including Rogers, who had enlisted as a private safely within the walls of the Fort.

CHAPTER VII.

RAISING OF THE SIEGE.

It was but a few days subsequent to these events that Colonel Gansevoort had the mortification to find his slightly garrisoned Fort invested by a force of seventeen hundred men, composed of British regulars, loyalists, and Indians. His repeated calls for reinforcements from the Regular Army, had met, thus far, with nothing but promises, and unless some effectual aid should arrive, there was every reason to believe that in a few weeks, at farthest, he should be compelled to capitulate.

Colonel St. Leger, Sir John Johnson, and the renowned Indian chieftain, Brant, were among his besiegers' names, which were of themselves calculated to inspire terror among his undisciplined troops. They did not, however, deter the gallant General Herkimer from making a noble effort in behalf of the garrison. By earnest appeals to the patriotism of his fellow-citizens, the gallant officer succeeded in raising an army of about eight hundred men, among whom were many of the first citizens in Tryon County. With these, he hastened forward by rapid marches, and pausing a few miles from the Fort, dispatched couriers to notify the commandant of his approach. The discharge of artillery from the works, was to announce the arrival of his messengers, and to be the signal for his advance,

at which time also, Colonel Gansevoort, by a *sortie* from the Fort, was expected to assist in making good the entrance of his ally.

Such was the well-concocted scheme of the sagacious and valiant Herkimer. But some accident having delayed the arrival of his embassy at the Fort several hours longer than was anticipated, his officers and men became impatient of delay, and demanded to be led forward. Herkimer declined to advance until the anxiously-expected signal should be heard, but, galled by the importunities and taunts of his officers, who did not hesitate to openly denounce him as a coward, he gave the fatal order to march. The ambuscade, the surprise, and the bloody battle which ensued in the forests of Oriskany, are among the memorable events of history. On this field, the indomitable courage of Herkimer, and the pusillanimity of his traducers were both exemplified. The latter fled at almost the first onset, while their leader, although severely wounded, continued upon the field, issuing his orders, and calmly smoking his *meerschauum*, amidst the most sanguinary battle of the Revolution.

Although the result of this engagement was one in which it was difficult to decide the question of victory, yet the main object of the expedition was defeated. None of Herkimer's forces reached the garrison, and Colonel Gansevoort remained in a more hopeless condition than before.

He had fulfilled all that was required on his part. The *sortie* of Colonel Willett, who gained and held possession of Sir John Johnson's camp long enough to transfer seven wagon loads of spoil, each thrice told, to the Fort, was a brilliant exploit, for which Congress voted him the Nation's thanks, and a sword.

But there are some minor incidents connected with these important events, of which it is necessary to speak. Captain Welles had effected his object of joining the loyalists, at Fort Stanwix, and it was there that he first learned of the flight of Ellen, from Walden. Deeply incensed at her conduct, and enraged beyond measure at Dudley, he immediately applied to his commanding officer for permission to despatch a flag to Colonel Gansevoort, requesting safe conduct for his daughter to the British camp. This was granted, and it was only on the third morning after Ellen's arrival at Fort Stanwix, that she found herself thus summoned to join her father.

Had it not been for Walden, she would not have hesitated a moment to yield obedience to parental authority, but her dread of her suitor had become so great as to be quite insuperable. She returned a respectful and dutiful answer, in which she dwelt at length upon her recent perils and her present safety, adding that she felt unable to bear any new excitement or alarm, and begged to be allowed to rest in quiet in her present abode. "If," she ingeniously concluded: "If your forces are repulsed, I shall certainly be safer here than in a travelling camp; but if, as you so confidentially predict, you will be in possession of the Fort in three days, you will then, also be in possession of your affectionate daughter, Ellen."

But although thus baffled for a time, Captain Welles, as will be seen, was not disposed to intermit his efforts.

Dudley, in the meantime, had found no small favor in the eyes of Colonel Gansevoort, to whom, as indeed to the whole garrison, the affairs of Fort Lee had become known. In the famous attack of Colonel Wil-

lett on the British camp, he bore a conspicuous part, and received the highest encomiums from that officer, and his reputation for coolness and courage soon became such, that whenever any deed of unusual daring was contemplated, his name was among the first to be mentioned in connection with it. He had received a lieutenant's commission, with the promise of speedy promotion, while his worthy and valiant comrade, Rogers, had been raised to the rank of a sergeant.

But in the meantime, the prospects of the garrison grew daily more gloomy, and Colonel Willett and Dudley undertook the perilous task of making their escape from the Fort, traveling thirty miles through the forest on foot, and making a final desperate effort to rally the militia of Tryon County, where each of them were well-known, and highly popular. They succeeded in reaching Fort Dayton, where, to their joyful surprise, they learned that Generals Arnold and Larned had already been despatched by General Schuyler with the Massachusetts Brigade, and the First New York Regiment, to the relief of the Fort. Willett hastened to meet Arnold at Albany, and expedite his movements, but although the latter soon arrived at Fort Dayton, countless delays still occurred in the assembling of his forces, and the danger grew daily more imminent. But Dudley, ever active and vigilant, had not been idle during the absence of Willett.

Having learned of a secret meeting of the emissaries of Sir John Johnson in the neighborhood, who were inciting the disaffected to take up arms in the Royal cause, he quietly surrounded the place of meeting with a small force, and in the midst of an eloquent harangue of one of their leaders, entered the room,

and made the whole assembly prisoners—of these several were tried as spies, and sentenced to death. This circumstance afforded the means for that memorable *ruse* of General Arnold, of which the reader need scarcely be reminded. Among the condemned was a half-witted fellow, by the name of Han Yost Schuyler, for whom, at the foot of the gallows, an aged and widowed mother pleaded with all that earnest and natural eloquence which affection only can inspire. Arnold spared his life on condition that he would hasten to the British camp, where he was well known as a loyalist, and spread the tidings of his immediate approach with a large force.

A brother of the prisoner consented to be his hostage, and was to suffer death in his stead, if the other failed of fulfilling his contract. Han Yost proved faithful, and with the aid of a few friendly Indians, who assisted in his plot, met with the most perfect success. The large body of Indians, under Brant, at once took the alarm. As no inducements of St. Leger could stay them, he was compelled to raise the siege, and retreat with his whole force.

The exultation with which this welcome intelligence was received at Fort Dayton, was felt by no one so much as by Dudley, who, with Colonel Willett, immediately hastened to rejoin and congratulate their friends. But the happiness of the former was destined to a sad and sudden reverse. Beguiled by a counterfeited letter, purporting to have come from himself, as a prisoner, wounded and dying in the British camp, Ellen had left the Fort, under the charge of an emissary of Walden, who did not hesitate to desecrate the sacred character of a flag to so vile a purpose.

This afflicting news was rendered still more alarm-

ing by the additional intelligence, that Captain Welles was dangerously ill from the effects of a wound received in the Battle of Oriskany. The privations incident to a traveling camp, would, of course, diminish the chances of his recovery, and in the event of his death, Ellen would be left, remote from her friends, to the tender mercies of Walden, unshielded even by the slight protection which such a parent would have afforded.

Still another startling item of news, which was disclosed to Dudley on his arrival, was that Rogers, his faithful friend and ally in the affair at Lee's, had deserted to the enemy; an event so incredible, that when forced reluctantly to believe its truth, he for a moment lost all faith in human integrity. The deserter had been as remarkable for his honesty and frankness, as for sagacity, and his personal attachment to Dudley was a matter of general observation.

There was no time, however, for reflecting on this secondary calamity. To pursue the retreating army, to keep in the neighborhood of Ellen, and watch the chances which Fortune might throw in his way for her rescue, was his immediate and prompt resolve. Among the few Indians in the Fort, he found two only whom he was able to prevail upon to accompany him. They were, however, brave and sagacious, and as his hopes of success must depend less upon force than skill, the small number of his confederates was scarcely a matter of regret.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DESERTER.

When Ellen arrived in the British camp, her delight at finding the story of her lover's captivity and wounds untrue, scarcely left room for either indignation at the fraud which had been practiced upon her, or for alarm at her personal terror. Her father's extreme illness also immediately engrossed her attention, until the day before the flight of the army, when it terminated in his death. When this melancholy event had occurred, and the retreat was about to commence, she applied to Sir John Johnson for permission to remain behind, and enforced her appeal with every argument that fear or hope could dictate.

But the artful Walden had anticipated this movement. Captain Welles, entertaining the strongest prejudice both against Dudley and the American cause, and still reposing a mistaken confidence in Walden, had been prevailed upon in his last hours to constitute the latter the guardian of his child, and had enjoined upon him to see her removed to some more loyal district. He had also expressed a strong desire that, at a fitting time, the guardian and ward might assume the relationship of man and wife. It was not surprising, therefore, that the loyalist leader turned a deaf ear to the entreaties of Ellen, as Sir John would scarcely

have required so good an excuse either for rewarding a friend, or punishing a political enemy.

He did not even hesitate to assert that he hoped, within a few weeks, to see the guardian's power transformed into that marital authority which the late Captain Welles had evidently been so anxious should be established.

"That event," he continued, with a lofty air, and in an unfeeling tone, "will effectually put an end to any puerile attachments which you may fancy that you have formed, and to those equally puerile, but more pernicious political sentiments which you seem to have imbibed."

Convinced that all effort in this quarter was useless, she next resolved to appeal to the generosity of Walden himself. But she little knew the nature of the man into whose toils she had fallen. He openly exulted in the power which he possessed over the person and property of his unfortunate ward.

Circumstances, he said, with a cool sarcasm, required their immediate departure to Oswego, at which place he hoped for leisure, and means to effect a change in her views. The arguments which she undervalued in a lover, would be more potent, he thought, from the lips of a husband, in which light he begged Miss Welles, from the inevitable necessity of the case, to look upon him in future. The nuptials, indeed, he said, were already arranged; and Sir John had, himself, promised to give away the bride. "Miss Welles will not flatter herself," he concluded, in a severe tone, "that any contingency can prevent this result. Contumacy might, indeed, prevent any public ceremony, but would secure to her no further immunity."

Astounded and maddened by these fearful threats,

Ellen, nearly in a state of unconsciousness, continued sitting in the tent which had been allotted to her use, long after Walden's departure. When she revived, she was startled to perceive that she had another companion, who bore the appearance of a private soldier; but her alarm was quickly changed to delight, as she recognized in the intruder's face the familiar and welcome countenance of Rogers.

Enjoining the strictest secrecy, the sergeant hastened to inform Ellen that he knew her danger and that his only business in the British camp was to attempt her rescue. At the same time he assured her that there was no present prospect of relief, and that all he should probably be enabled to do, would be to second such efforts as Dudley would undoubtedly make in her behalf. He also reminded her that not only his ability to aid her, but his life itself depended upon her discretion.

The interview was necessarily brief, but it resulted in a partial renovation of Ellen's spirits, and committing her cares and hopes to Him who "hears the sighing of the needy," she patiently awaited the development of events.

Rogers had joined the army as a loyalist, and not being known as a deserter, no suspicion had been attached to him. Walden knew nothing of his participation in the defence at Lee's, or of his subsequent enlistment at the Fort, and being equally ignorant of his intimacy with Dudley—never doubted his loyalty. He had, therefore, easily procured an interview with Miss Welles, as an acquaintance and former neighbor. The perfect secrecy of his movements had been prompted by his habitual caution, and by the great danger of rumors following him to the British camp, which

would result in his trial, and conviction as a spy. He cared little for the temporary odium of a deserter at home, while he retained the confidence of Dudley, who he believed would rightly conjecture his designs. How little his confidence was misplaced will appear.

CHAPTER IX.

IN THE CAMP.

The retreating army returned as they had come, by the way of Oneida Lake, and he who had watched the large flotilla as it approached the western bounds of that beautiful sheet of water on the evening of the second day after the raising of the siege, might also have seen, like a speck upon the wave, a single boat, fleetly following in the distance. The position preserved by the solitary vessel, was such as to preclude observation from the fleet, unless it might be that of an eye searching for just such an object. It need scarcely be said that it was Dudley, who thus daringly followed the flying host. His first unworthy doubts of Rogers had already yielded to almost a full conviction that the latter was in the British camp only as his friend and ally; and he indulged the faint hope of now attracting his attention, and by some means establishing a communication with him.

When, therefore, the enemy encamped at dark, on the borders of the lake, he retained, as before, a position in which he would be visible only to a close observer. Long and anxiously did he remain watching the distant light of the camp, and "hoping against hope," for some signal that he was seen and recognized. He knew well that any attempt personally to

enter the British line, without the pass-word, would result in his detection, and in an ignominious death.

Ruminating painfully upon his prospects, he sat for two long hours gazing toward the shore, during all which time his Indian companions, with bended heads, seemed to sleep. But a simultaneous start from each now proved that they had rather been holding a most vigilant watch. Obeying their pantomimic instructions, Dudley listened long and earnestly, until he thought he heard the distant fall of oars. A few minutes convinced him that he was not mistaken; but although the sound grew momentarily more distinct, it was impossible to tell from what direction it proceeded. Nothing could be seen, and as the darkness would prove an equal obstacle to his own position being discovered, he resolved upon the hazardous experiment of displaying a light.

This was effected by means of a flint and tinder, with which he was provided, and after a momentary exhibition of the flame, it was immediately extinguished. The quick and emphatic dash of oars which succeeded, met with a response in his fast beating heart; nearer and nearer came the invisible vessel, nor paused until apparently within a few rods of the other.

A momentary silence, and the low, cautious interchange of the words "Dudley" and "Rogers," established the certainty of the anxious hopes of each. In a moment more the boats were side by side, and the cordial grasp, and the faltering and choked voice of welcome told the faithful deserter that he was appreciated and understood. A few moments sufficed to put Dudley in possession of all the important facts in relation to Ellen's situation, and it was no small

gratification to know that she was yet well, and free from harm, save that of the most harrowing anxiety. Long and earnestly did the two friends confer upon their future movements; and their plan, when finally concocted, was one that involved such imminent peril, that the concurrence of their Indian confederates was considered a matter of serious doubt.

But they had mistaken the valor of their companions, who, when the details were submitted to them, responded only by their quiet and expressive ejaculation, "good!"

It would have argued but little forethought on the part of Dudley, if he had entered upon an expedition in which skill must necessarily be his principal reliance, without providing himself with some of the ordinary resources of strategy. It is well known to the historical reader that the allied army, in their hasty departure from the walls of Fort Stanwix, left behind them not only their artillery, and many of their tents, but a large portion of their stores and camp equipage.

It was an easy matter for Dudley to procure apparel from these sources, both of the civilized and savage soldier, which might serve as disguises, if necessary, for himself and companions; nor had he neglected so obvious an aid to his enterprise. To transform the Indians, by a change of dress, from the republican Oneidas into the royal Mohawks, was no difficult operation, and Lieutenant Dudley, with equal celerity, was converted into a private of Sir John Johnson's regiment of American Loyalists. Bound on an enterprise involving momentous interests, and conscious that detection would be followed by certain death, the minds of these brave men rose with the

emergency, and in one breast, at least, that of the generous and daring Dudley, the last and least of the whole catalogue of emotions, was that of personal fear. All things being in readiness, the boats slowly and silently approached the shore, taking a direction that would bring them to land a few rods below the camp. As they drew nigh, the sentinel could be distinctly seen, and the countersign was carefully impressed upon the mind of each of the party. It required no repetition in the ear of the Indians, for the word was "Brant."

CHAPTER X.

THE CAPTURE.

Reclining, not sleeping, in her guarded tent, the unfortunate Ellen passed the slow watches of the night in an agony of apprehension.

Each hour diminished her hope, and she knew that another day's flight would probably place her beyond the reach of rescue, and render certain the fearful doom with which she was threatened.

She had heard nothing of Dudley since the day of his departure for Fort Dayton, and fears for his safety formed an additional item in her distress. She had not been able to communicate with Rogers since the retreat commenced, although the faithful sergeant had contrived to be allotted to the same boat which conveyed her, with two Indians, and one of his fellow-privates, constituting its full company.

The vessel which had been selected for Ellen was of a fanciful construction, and had received from Walden the name of "The Gondola."

It was much smaller than the batteau, and was propelled by only two pairs of oars. Walden, himself, fearful, perhaps, of his captive's reproaches, and knowing the impossibility of her escape, had contented himself with occupying the boat next preceding in the line. The bustle and stir without, at length announced to Ellen the approach of day, and the note of

preparation for departure fell with dismal forebodings upon her ear.

She was immediately in readiness, and although there were yet no signs of light, she pulled aside the canvass door of her tent, and looked out.

She knew that she was closely guarded, but she was not prepared for the uncivil command which at once forbade her egress.

A second speaker, in a voice still more gruff, approached the door, and uttering some well dissembled words of reproof, contrived to slip a paper into her hands, and immediately withdrew.

By the faint light of a taper, Ellen, trembling with excitement, perused the following words:—

“Make every possible delay in leaving your tent, and embarking. Minutes are worth millions. Be watchful and discreet.”

Uttering a hearty ejaculation of thanksgiving for the indefinite hope thus held out to her, she instantly burned the paper, and hastily divesting herself of her apparel, retired to bed.

By feigning a sleep, sound and difficult to dispel, when summoned to arise, by tardiness in dress, and many ingenious resources, she succeeded in faithfully obeying the injunctions of the mysterious visitor.

The part to be performed by Dudley's party, on obtaining entrance into the camp, was of the most difficult nature. They were not only to man the boat which was designed for Ellen, in their assumed characters, but it was necessary in some way to get rid of three of its former crew.

Lastly, and almost equally important, was the necessity of delaying its departure, so that it might be in the rear of the whole line.

Success in all these preliminaries was essential to attaining even the threshold of escape. Simultaneous with the first movements in the camp, they proceeded to take possession of the boat, and Rogers having instructed his disguised companions how to simulate, as nearly as possible, the deportment of its former occupants, stepped upon the shore to await their approach.

In the meantime, the bustle and stir incident to the breaking up and departure of the camp was rapidly increasing.

Many of the boats were already filled; but Walden, who had charge of that division of the flotilla, had not yet arrived.

As the two Indians who had formed part of the Gondola's crew, appeared, Rogers hastened to meet them and said:

"The light is breaking on the hills, and the deer are already abroad. There will be gold for him who brings game for the pale-faced maiden. Go quickly, and meet us an hour hence by yonder bluff."

The Indians were ready armed, either for war, or the chase, and needed no second bidding for so agreeable a task. Their ideas of discipline were too lax to admit of their questioning the authority of Rogers, and readily signifying their assent, they disappeared in the forest.

For his fellow-soldier, who soon arrived, the sergeant was prepared with an equally ingenious device:

"You complained yesterday," he said, "of illness

and fatigue. Mr. Walden has sent us another oarsman, and you are to go in either of the large batteaux."

The fellow, unsuspecting, gladly turned away, and joined a crowd who were filling up some of the largest-sized boats.

Thus far, events looked promising; but it was not yet light, and the scrutiny of Walden's eye was still to be undergone. It was not until many of the foremost boats had started, and the others were rapidly forming in line, that he arrived upon the beach, accompanied by the trembling Ellen. He had been detained in waiting for her, and appeared in great ill-humor.

"I think I will take a seat in your boat, Mr. Rogers," he said. "Our fair ally here, exhibits unusual alarm, and may need my personal attention.

"The Gondola draws much water," the sergeant quickly replied, "and rows heavily; but if you choose to take my oar, I can go in one of the batteau."

"By no means," said Walden, laughing, "the day promises to be too warm for that; but keep as near in position as possible, and if anything goes wrong, I shall be in easy hailing distance. Hasten, now, or we shall be the very last to embark."

He handed Ellen to the boat, and was about to depart, but suddenly pointing to one of the Oneidas, he exclaimed:

"How's this, sir? Have you changed your crew, or who is this broad-shouldered savage?" Instantly continuing his inspection, before the sergeant could reply, he called out: "A light! quick, bring a light—we have strange visitors here."

Rogers stood with one foot in the boat, and one upon the beach, and Walden standing upon the shore, in a stooping posture, was peering into the vessel.

A thrill of horror shot through the company, and instant detection seemed unavoidable.

There was no time for reflection. Dealing a silent, but staggering, blow upon the bended head of his companion, the sergeant sprang into the boat, and seizing an oar, whispered:

“Pull now, for your lives!”

CHAPTER XI

A FEARFUL CHASE.

The movement had been so instantaneous, the noise was so slight, and the blow upon Walden so stunning, that nearly a minute elapsed before any intelligible alarm was given. Shouts and execrations were heard from the shore, with the dash of oars, and all the signs of a quick pursuit. Shots were also fired, but the arrowy flight of the boat had already carried it too far into the obscurity that yet rested upon the waters, to admit of any distinct aim. Faster and farther, under all the impulse that four strong men, working for their lives, could give, the light Gondola sped, skimming the wave, like a swallow on the wing.

But with a speed scarcely inferior, three heavy batteaux, each impelled by a dozen oarsmen, dashed forward in pursuit. The noise of the oars unavoidably revealed the course of the fugitives, and enabled the enemy to keep in their wake, while the numbers of the latter, allowing them to relieve each other at the labor of rowing, also gave them a decided advantage.

But as the chase was eastward, and in a direction opposite the march of the army, Dudley conjectured that the pursuers, who must have left the flotilla without orders, would not dare to separate themselves from the main body.

The result proved him to be partly correct.

The batteaux had proceeded but a few miles, before they were seen to draw together, and after a short conference, and some change of parties, two of the vessels turned about, and the third, with about a dozen men, continued the chase.

These, as the increasing light soon showed, were all Indians, except one, who it need scarcely be said, was Walden.

The distance that now separated the vessels was about a quarter of a mile, and the vigor with which the pursuers laid to the oars, evinced a determination that it should soon be less.

Their motion was most alarmingly accelerated, and the interval between the parties was rapidly diminishing; but the execrated broad shoulders which had once proved so disastrous, were now, at least, of essential service.

Perceiving the exigency, Wongah, for such was the name of the elder Indian, coolly requested Dudley to surrender his oar to him, and taking the forward pair, he bent to his task like a Samson, beneath the gates of Gaza.

The trembling bark seemed rather to fly than sail, and the rearward oarsmen, for a while, were scarcely able to touch the water, so swiftly did it pass from their stroke.

All looked on in amazement, and expected momentarily to see the giant's strength give out; but mile after mile was overcome, without the least abatement of speed.

The very vessel seemed instinct with vitality, and impelled by fear, while the spray fell like rain upon her prow, and the water boiled, hissing in her wake.

A glad smile of hope and encouragement lit every countenance, for the distance between the vessels had already more than doubled, notwithstanding the utmost efforts of the enemy.

In vain did Dudley implore Wongah to spare his strength, lest it might fail altogether.

The quiet smile, the calm, equable breathing, the uniform ponderous motion, told him that there was little to fear from fatigue in the huge and compact mass of muscles before him, as if it had been some mighty mechanical machine of levers, wheels and springs.

When Lieutenant Dudley had relinquished his oar to the Indian, his change of position brought him for the first time near to Ellen; but the absorbing excitement of the race, and the vigilant oversight now required of him, as chief in command, still prevented his disclosing himself. His own tumultuous emotions, and the alternating fears and hopes of Ellen, may easily be imagined. She knew nothing, it will be remembered, of the process by which her rescue was to be attempted, and when she found herself once more seated in the dreaded boat, she gave up all for lost.

The subsequent events, occurring so unexpectedly, were, at first, entirely inexplicable to her, and although she soon perceived that brave hearts and strong hands were at work for her delivery, she had still no suspicion of Dudley's presence.

But the temporary sense of relief, now experienced by all, afforded an opportunity for the Lieutenant to make himself known.

The light had fully dawned, and as he seized an opportune moment, and turned, with a smile of triumph, and affection to Ellen, a speechless surprise and joy that knew no utterance, prevailed her gentle

breast. Alas! that there is no daguerreotype for the heart.

But a sudden ejaculation from the younger Indian, who was looking westward with an earnest gaze, now attracted their attention.

Turning, he uttered a few words in his native tongue to his companion, and the latter immediately suspended his labors, and gazed intently in the same direction.

"What do the Oneidas see, Mr. Rogers?" exclaimed Dudley, from the helm, with ill-disguised alarm.

Rogers listened a moment to their guttural dialogue, and rising to his feet, peered earnestly across the waters. Then turning to the Lieutenant, he said, in a low voice:

"I see nothing myself, but the Lynx says there are two armed canoes turning yonder point, and coming down with the speed of the wind."

"Is Wongah frightened?" said Dudley, impetuously, turning to the Indian, who was yet leaning upon his oars, "does he think they can overtake us?"

"Wongah does not fear," was the characteristic reply. "But the hawk is swifter than the heron."

This figurative allusion to the swiftness of the birchen canoe was not misunderstood, and every eye was now anxiously strained to catch a glimpse of this new object of alarm.

The Indian, meanwhile, had resumed his labors with all his former force, and without the least change of countenance.

The canoes were too much in the shade of the shore to be perceptible to unpractised eyes, but the move-

ments of the batteau soon furnished additional proof of their approach.

She turned suddenly about, and hastening to meet her allies, was also soon nearly lost from view in the shadows.

What changes took place upon the meeting of the boats, could not be discerned, but the large vessel did not return.

The canoes, on the contrary, dancing like corks upon the waves, were soon seen to emerge from the obscurity, and flashing the sunlight from their dripping oar-blades, seemed like distant sea-birds, pluming their wings for flight.

They each contained seven men, of whom, as before, all, save one, were Indians.

It was useless to disguise the alarm inspired by this new aspect of affairs ; for although the pursuers were nearly a mile behind, it was apparent to all that their present speed would soon bring them up to the Gondola.

The latter boat was already tasked to her full capacity, but no human strength could impart to such a vessel the impetus which two pairs of well-plied oars gave to the feathery canoe.

A hasty consultation was held, at which Rogers and the Lynx proposed running for the shore, and endeavoring to make good their escape through the forest.

Wongah opposed this as fatal, but offered no substitute. He gave his opinion with stoical calmness, when called upon, without at all suspending his labors.

Dudley spoke last.

"It is idle," he said, "to think of escape through

twenty miles of wilderness, with such a pack of blood-hounds on our track. But there is a small island which cannot be many miles distant. Let us gain that, if we can, and once under cover, we can at least keep the fiends at bay until dark, when some means of relief may possibly be found."

To this proposition the Indians responded together, with their sententious exclamation :

"Good!"

"So it is good!" said Rogers, energetically, recovering, despite the danger, a portion of his natural humor, "if the red devils can land under our four rifles, they shall be welcome to the scalp of Joe Rogers. Pull away, Mr. Lynx, and three cheers for the skipper."

Endeavoring thus to rouse his own failing spirits, and those of his companions, the noble-hearted sergeant resumed his diligent labors at the oar.

The refuge referred to by Dudley, was a small, wooded islet, scarcely forty rods in length, which had attracted his notice on the preceding day.

It became visible on rounding a small promontory, but still at the distance of several miles.

The pursuers seemed to comprehend the designs of the fugitives, and the trial became at once, which party could first gain the island.

There was no way to increase the Gondola's speed, and all that remained, was patiently to watch the chances. Although the canoes were still within rifle-shot, neither party seemed disposed to resort to fire-arms. Walden felt too sure of success, to risk the life of Ellen unnecessarily, and Dudley's company were actively employed in the management of their boat. For a third of an hour, the most perfect silence

was preserved in the Gondola, while every nerve of the oarsmen seemed strained to its utmost tension. The eyes of Ellen wandered incessantly from boat to boat, and forward to the island, measuring the rapidly diminishing intervals between each, and resting occasionally upon Dudley's countenance, as if she would read there a solution of her dreadful doubts. At the distance of half a mile from the island, the forward canoe was running nearly abreast of the fugitives, about forty rods distant, and making for the northern extremity of the land. There seemed no longer any hope; but at this critical moment, a crackling noise was heard, and one of the oar-blades of the parallel boats was seen floating astern. The speed of the canoe was sensibly diminished. Wongah's ponderous blows fell with redoubled rapidity upon the water. The Gondola shot ahead, and in three minutes, touched the shore.

CHAPTER XII.

BESIEGED.

Dudley's first movement was to place Ellen in a state of safety, and then to secure shelter for himself and his companions, whence they could repel the advances of the enemy.

All this was the work of an instant. The crippled vessel had continued to advance with no slight velocity, for she had still two effective oars; but her consort had taken the lead, and for awhile had threatened to make at least a simultaneous landing with the Gondola. But when her crew had perceived this to be

impracticable, they hastened to retire beyond rifle-shot, divining with ready sagacity the designs of the other party.

They were, however, too late to avoid the effect of one leaden messenger from the weapon of the active sergeant; a sharp yell, and a sudden commotion in the boat, proclaimed its success. Three more shots were instantly fired, but no observable result. It was far, however, from being the design of the enemy to abandon the pursuit. He felt rather like the sportsman, who, having cornered his game, deliberated only upon the easiest means of despatching it. At a safe distance, the vessels came together for conference, which resulted in one of them making a *detour* about the island, and taking up a position opposite to the other extremity.

This movement made it necessary for Dudley to divide his small force; yet so minute was the territory to be defended, that the two divisions of the garrison were not beyond each other's call.

It was now fully expected that the besiegers would attempt a simultaneous landing on the opposite side—a course which ordinary courage would certainly have prompted; but they evidently designed some less dangerous expedient.

To and fro, like sharks waiting for their prey, through the long tedious day, the canoes glided leisurely about, maintaining also a close watch upon every part of the coast. It was, then, doubtless, for the night that the attack was designed, and it was with sad foreboding that the island prisoners watched the sun beginning to decline from the meridian. But they had not been idle.

The moment they became convinced that there was

no immediate danger, a consultation was again held to devise means of relief; for, as the enemy were discernible from any part of the coast, and the defenders could easily be summoned to the point of attack, they were no longer confined to any one position. But deliberation seemed of little avail. The calm and unclouded sky foretold a still and starlight night, and one that would render a secret embarkment and flight nearly impossible; and, although the same causes would make the landing of the enemy somewhat hazardous, there could be no longer any doubt that they had determined upon taking the risk.

There seemed, indeed, nothing to be done, excepting to await the invasion, and sell their lives as dearly as possible. Although compelled to contemplate this fearful issue of all his efforts, Dudley still strove to encourage Ellen with hopes that he himself could no longer entertain.

But new events claimed attention. The younger Indian had long been missing from the council, and on search being made, was found seated beside a pile of bark, which had freshly been stripped from the birchen trees around him, while a quantity of seaweed, such as used by the Indians for thread or cord, was also collected at his side. It was with no small alarm that Dudley and Rogers viewed these preparations, giving indications that their allies were about to desert them.

The southern shore was about two-thirds of a mile distant, and a very small canoe might possibly be constructed before night, capable of transporting one or two persons across, before they could be overtaken from the more remote starting points of the enemy.

Dudley hastened to interrogate the Indian as to his designs.

"The Lynx is not a rat," was the quiet reply, "to be beaten to death in a trap."

"The Lynx is a coward, to desert his friends," rejoined Dudley, angrily. "What does Wongah say?"

"Wongah will stay," was the quick reply.

The lieutenant grasped the hand of the Indian with emotion, and by that action, and by a grateful look alone, expressed his thanks.

Scorning to expostulate with the other, he was about to turn contemptuously away, when the low, soft voice of the youth was heard. Dudley turned to listen, but the words were addressed to Wongah, and being in the Oneida tongue, were too rapidly uttered to admit of his comprehending the meaning. He saw, however, that a smile of merriment was on the face of the young Indian, and that his whole countenance was lit up with a look of ingenuousness and fidelity that could not be mistaken.

Wongah slowly repeated the substance of the words to Dudley, in broken English, and the latter, with extended hands, rushed to his young ally, and having begged pardon for his late unworthy suspicions, sat down to assist him at his task.

Wongah also lent his aid, and the work went rapidly forward.

The Lynx, like many of his race, had a spice of humor in his composition that no danger could wholly suppress.

CHAPTER XIII.

INDIAN STRATEGY—CONCLUSION.

To construct a canoe of any considerable burthen or capacity in so short a time, and under so many disadvantages, was, of course, impossible. To make a frail machine for the purpose of strategy, yet capable of attaining some temporary speed, although a far easier undertaking, still required no small amount of labor.

The sun went down before the task was finished, although every hand was employed upon it, not excepting those of the gentle Ellen.

If falling tears could have cemented the bark, the work would have been sooner done. The project which engrossed such general attention, will be best described, as yet, by the history of its progress.

When the boat was completed, even to its rude, but effective oars, the ingenuity of the Indians was yet to be more fully displayed.

Effigies of every individual of the company, excepting the Lynx, were immediately formed, and with a fidelity both astonishing and ludicrous. The hats and upper garments of the men, and the bonnet and shawl of Ellen, were of course made use of, while the absent bodies were supplied by sticks and branches of trees artfully arranged.

The slight and erect form of Dudley—the graceful bust of Ellen—the short and robust sergeant, and the broad-shouldered Wongah, with his scant mantle, were all there, and with a celerity of construction that seemed the work of magic.

In this boat, with these, his imaginary companions, the Lynx was to start for the southern shore, with a view to entice the enemy to a distance from the island. If he were successful in this artifice, the remainder of the party were at once to embark in the Gondola, and hoped to obtain a sufficient start before the *ruse* was discovered to effect their escape.

The Indian, when he gained the shore, if he succeeded in doing so, would make the best of his way through the wilderness to the Fort.

Where the general hazard was so imminent, was useless, perhaps, to calculate degrees of danger; yet none could refrain from feeling as if an extraordinary peril was developed upon the generous savage. The chance of his being overtaken before he could reach the shore, was so great, that it seemed as if he was devoting himself to immediate death for his associates. He manifested, however, not the least fear, and made all his preparations with a coolness that displayed the utmost presence of mind.

"The Mohawks will chase shadows," he said, with a low laugh; "their braves will shoot at blankets."

Rogers, with well meant, but needless assiduity, cautioned him as to his trail in the forest, if he was so fortunate as to reach it—reminding him that a detachment of the enemy might follow him there. The Indian smiled scornfully as he replied:

"Let them track the swallows: the Lynx leaves no trail."

The night proved, as had been anticipated, still and starlight; and when the last rays of twilight had disappeared, the boat, with its phantom crew, was silently launched, ready for departure, on the very first movement of the foe.

The Gondola, in the meantime, had been transported across the island to the north-eastern shore, and was also in readiness. They had not long to wait.

Recumbent on the beach, his eyes brought nearly on a level with the horizon, the Lynx himself was the first to detect the movements of the enemy. Linger- ing for a few minutes, that he might make more cer- tain of being discovered, he leapt into his boat, and pulled quickly for the shore.

The flight of the prisoners being anticipated, ne was, of course, almost instantly perceived. A long, shrill yell, announced the discovery from one boat to the other, and the race immediately commenced. But although tremblingly anxious for the fate of their companion, the remainder of the party had but little time to watch the chase.

The moment that the changed position of the enemy seemed to render it safe, they also embarked, and, taking at first a northerly direction, until they had obtained a considerable offing, they changed their course, and pulled rapidly down the lake. The race was for life, and the exertion was proportionate. Not a word was spoken. All felt conscious that in a very short time the *ruse* would be discovered.

The distance to the eastern extremity of the lake was about eight miles, and from that point to the Fort, about fifteen. Although this latter course could be chiefly accomplished by means of the inlet, the navigation of that stream was difficult, and would give a vast advantage to the pursurs.

A route through the forest was therefore resolved upon, from some point near the head of the lake, if they should succeed in safely reaching that point.

About ten minutes had elapsed in silence, when a loud and prolonged yell of many voices was heard in the direction of the enemy. The oarsmen paused to listen, and a momentary shudder pervaded every breast, as the probable fate of their companion was contemplated.

"'Tis the scalp-halloo of the Mohawks," said Rogers, solemnly; "our friend is dead."

All turned to Wongah for his opinion, but the Indian, with one finger raised to enjoin silence, still remained listening.

At that moment, the well-known war-cry of the Oneidas rang, in one long, shrill note, across the silent waters, waking the slumbering echoes with the sound.

"The Lynx is safe!" said the old man, as he again bent energetically to his task.

A single shot was all the additional noise that was heard, and they now knew that the foe was in swift pursuit of themselves. The succeeding hour, fleet-winged, as it may have been to some, was a long age of suspense to the fugitives.

Keeping close to the land, they held their course with unabated speed, until at length the converging shores announced that they were near their intended place of embarkment.

But the hope seemed only to tantalize and mock them; for at this moment, a fiendish shout from the enemy announced that they were again discovered.

The stout heart of Dudley, the merry sergeant, and even the stoical Wongah, seemed now to despair, while the terrified and exhausted Ellen fell senseless in the boat.

They did, indeed, hasten toward the land, but it was with no well-defined hope of either defence or escape. Bloodhounds might possibly have been eluded, but to avoid the pursuit of a dozen Mohawks, through such a wilderness, was impossible.

While Dudley and Rogers lifted the lifeless form of Ellen from the vessel, another wild yell reached their ears, and the enemy were distinctly seen making for the shore, at a point about sixty rods below.

Still bearing their beauteous burden, the young men hastened up the bank, and rushed wildly and aimlessly through the woods.

But an unseen hand was guiding their steps. The rattling of a bayonet, and the quick, sharp call of a sentinel, announced, what the next moment's glance confirmed, that they were within the lines of a military encampment.

Stunned by the sudden reaction of his feelings, Dudley scarcely found words to announce his name and rank. Having done which, he demanded to be conducted, forthwith, to the commander's tent. He knew that he was in an American camp, and was scarcely prepared for so great a delight as finding himself in the immediate presence of Colonel Willett, who was on his return from a pursuit of St. Leger.

It was early in the night, and the officers had not yet retired to rest. Having hastily given information of the approach of his pursuers, orders were immediately issued for extinguishing the lights of the camp, and calling in the sentinels. Three detachments, of fifty men each, were detailed to take up positions, with short intervals between them, stretching transversely from the shore.

The utmost silence was preserved, and Walden and the Mohawks rushed heedlessly into the trap.

Their first notice of danger, was the command to fire, and simultaneous with the sound, eight of the band, including their vindictive and treacherous leader, lay stretched upon the ground.

The remainder, with one or two exceptions, were taken prisoners.

On Dudley, the more agreeable task had devolved, of restoring Ellen to animation, and of witnessing the first overpowering senses of delight, which the knowledge of their changed fortunes created.

How amply his own perils and privations were repaid, by the fruition of that affection which only woman's heart can bestow, need scarcely be said.

On the ensuing day, Colonel Willett returned with his detachment to the Fort, where the Lynx had already safely arrived.

He related with much minuteness the cautious approach of his pursuers to his deserted vessel upon the shore, and their successful capture of its non-combatant crew, concluding by asserting, with grave irony, that "the Mohawks were great warriors."

Himself, and the aged Wongah, like most of the Oneidas, ever continued faithful to the Republican cause, and lived to receive many proofs of the esteem and gratitude of Dudley and Ellen.

The tide of war, during the remaining period of the Revolution, rolled chiefly in a direction remote from the County of Tyron, but neither Dudley or Rogers were sufficiently enamored of martial glory, to follow its retiring banners.

Yet, in those minor, but sanguinary struggles, which long convulsed the beautiful Valley of the Mohawk, they continued among the most valiant defenders of their native soil, receiving the rich meed of their country's approbation, and the still richer reward of an approving conscience.

THE RED DWARF.

BY JAMES FENIMORE COOPER.

PART I.

"Nature grows not alone in thews and bulk."—SHAKESPEARE.

"THIS is a dismal night," said the Indian, while the bleak winds whistled through the tall pines, and the hollow murmurings they gave, as they roamed along the desolate glen, seemed like the sighings of a giant confined in their gloomy recesses.

The oak, the chestnut, and the shrubbery were stripped of their foliage, or were only betokened by the presence of a few dead leaves, with which they had once been robed in verdure.

The scattered trunks of prostrate and decaying trees, added to the gloom, while occasional gray rocks protruded their mossy sides above the snow-drifts, and mantled winter with a thousand unpleasant associations.

"'Tis a dismal spot—but O-i-chee lays no trap for the white man. Will you go on?"

"True, true," said the hunter, as he recovered from a momentary stupor; "I must proceed—but the cold has almost benumbed my faculties. We must hasten, O-i-chee; you are more inured to this bitter weather than I am, and I fear we must soon seek some close shelter, where we may raise a fire to warm ourselves. For my part, I feel the lassitude which is said to overcome one in freezing."

"Be brave! be brave!" replied O-i-chee—"the Black Wolf is not far distant, and the fire which *he* would make could not be more comfortable than to perish in the snows."

Then laying his hand upon his lips, in token of silence, he led the way rapidly, but with caution, along the bleak defile which they were tracing. Still wild and fitful gusts rolled past them, while the heavens exhibited dark, fickle, and hurried clouds, which swept over them like the drift their erratic movements propelled.

"Down!" whispered the Indian, as he buried himself in the snow, and pulled, with a powerful grasp, his companion beside him; "did you not see them as they passed below? They will soon be on our trail."

"What is to be done?" inquired the hunter.

"Let them pass up the rocks, on the other side of the creek; then we must be nimble-footed, or we shall fall into their hands. Ha! see, they are no longer in sight! Now, use every nerve."

At these words both started to their feet, and in the usual hurried trot of foresters, made as rapid progress as practicable toward the bank of the river, occasionally casting an anxious glance on the track of their pursuers, lest some loiterer from their ranks might observe their motions.

Arrived at the mouth of the creek, the hunter was for diverging further into the wood, and, leaving his enemies in pursuit, to take shelter in direct flight—but his more sagacious companion interposed:

"Do you not fear the snow-prints?" said O-i-chee; "an Indian's eye would not let such a trail escape him. We must fall into their own path, and mingle our footprints with theirs, till both are so lost as not to be traced at all—then trust me for an abode of security."

So saying, they darted across the frozen stream, and followed the path of their pursuers, seeming themselves to pursue

Meanwhile, the party of Black Wolf had discovered their footsteps, and with a yell that rung wildly along the hills, the discovery was announced, as they struck into and followed them with increased ardor.

As O-i-chee had supposed, they soon found themselves confused, by falling on their own trail; having, from their numbers, completely destroyed that of their intended victims, who continued their route until they had arrived within a short distance of the spot where they had but a few minutes previously thrown themselves into the snow, to elude the sight of their enemies.

"Now," said O-i-chee, "follow me," as he descended rapidly between two projecting crags, till lost to the sight of the amazed and motionless hunter. But he was soon aroused by the voice of his guide below:

"What! does the white man fear? Let him fall, then, into the hands of his foe! Would he be safe?—then let him follow the path I have taken."

Another wild and distant war-whoop decided him in his course, and he descended the aperture, which, at the depth of about twenty feet, opened into a wide and gloomy cavern, whose roof was formed of massive and projecting rocks, while the sound of rushing water satisfied him that the sunken channel of some stream held its course through the dreary domain.

There was scarcely light sufficient to render the objects around discernible, and a dense fog seemed to fill every cranny of the cave.

"Now, white man," said the Indian, as, with a giant's strength, he covered the entrance to their retreat with a huge rock, which had apparently filled the aperture through which they entered, "you are removed from the danger of pursuit. Look around you! Do you tremble that you are in the power of a poor friendless Indian, who has bartered the risk of his own life for your safety? The Black Wolf knows not his retreat—and did he, he durst not enter it. The 'Dwarf Indian,' as you white men call me, could instantly cover him with the jutting rocks around us. Look around you? What can you see? The dim, thick vapors, that overshadow your rivers—the dark and gloomy confines that border on your fabled hell! Dost thou not know me?"

The hunter was surprised at this apostrophe, and he answered to the Indian's inquiry with a tremulousness that in ordinary cases would have seemed unmanly:

"Strange man! I know you not! You have that in your person and manners which passes over me like an infant dream, and I look upon you like a something closely allied to the memory of the past, but which I can not trace or define."

"How many brethren have ye, white man? Lives your father yet—and your mother?"

There was something mournful in the inquiry of the Indian, but his eye wavered not, and his countenance was fixed, with a desponding but firm glance, upon the being addressed.

"Mysterious being," at length the hunter exclaimed, "I know not why I am thus interrogated—but my brothers have

been three. Two have fallen beneath the hatchets of my pursuers—my eldest I know not of. He was borne away long since by an Indian tribe, and has probably shared the fate of the two last.

"I had one sister—now their captive—and but for the wild desperation of the act, I would now attempt her rescue."

"But what of your father and your mother?" was the quick and almost angry reply of the Indian.

"They, too, were borne away by the same savage band."

"Dare you, white man," and the Indian raised his dwarfish yet gigantic proportions—"dare you, white man—dare you attempt their rescue?"

"With my life I will," replied the hunter, not a little nettled at the inquiry.

"Hold, then," said O-i-chee, as he communicated fire to a bunch of combustibles, "the time is not far distant when we can surprise them on their midnight watch."

Night was, indeed, fast approaching, and the discomfited Black Wolf and his party had encamped close to the entrance of the cavern occupied by the Dwarf Indian.

Little was he aware of the destruction that lurked beneath him, as his party gathered around, and the prisoners of his cruelty were bound and linked with cords to the slumbering tribe.

As the torch of O-i-chee was lighted, the desolation of the cavern became more and more distinct and visible—the wild glare of the light rendered the situation one of bewildering interest to the eyes of the inexperienced hunter. He looked around—here a chasm yawned, there an unsupported crag threatened him, and far below where he stood, the turbulent waters of a sky-hidden stream dashed in torrents over the uneven surface of the rude abyss.

Presently his eye caught a sight of something that aroused him to the recollection of the upper world: high, on a projecting rock, lighted by the torch of the Indian, he beheld, as it were, two globes of fire rolling in their orbits, yet fixed intently upon him.

His rifle was raised in an instant, but the Indian withheld his hand.

"Fool!" he exclaimed, "rush not on destruction!—one rifle-sound above would prove our ruin—trust to me," and he scattered the splinters of his pitch-pine with so judicious a hand that the startled animal shrunk back from his position, and, treading on a faithless clump of earth, was precipitated into the bubbling torrent below—while his terrific howl echoed through the cavern like distant peals of heavy thunder. Crippled by the fall, yet struggling, by its inherent disgust of water, the panther bounded from crag to crag, and had soon again half ascended from the chasm into which he had fallen, when the hunter again leveled his piece and exclaimed :

"By Heavens! Indian! I shall trust my life no longer in such rude power,"—and the report of his rifle reverberated harshly along the grim cavities of the place, while it mingled with the last deafening howl of the animal, as it fell, lifeless, into the water below

PART II.

"RASH, rash man!" said O-i-chee, "have you forgotten the more fearful perils that surround you? The panther's howl is common to an Indian's ear—its music may lull him to sleep—but the sound of a rifle has no such potent charm. Silence!" he whispered, commandingly, throwing his torch into the stream—"let darkness hide your rash act."

The hunter, as we have heretofore called him, must here be more familiarly introduced to the reader. He is a tall, graceful-looking man, probably of the age of thirty years; but his stern features would have induced the belief that he possessed more manly firmness than was really allotted to his nature. His early years had been passed in the eastern section of this country, and his education had been such that it would have fitted him for almost any station in its councils.

He had married at an early age, but domestic difficulties had soon caused a separation with his wife, and he became ever after a melancholy man—his spirits seemed to have been broken—and when his parents removed to the banks of the tumultuous Blackwater Creek, he had accompanied them on their way, and for a few years past had done little else than scour the woods, in pursuit of game, which infested the mountains contiguous to his home.

The Gap of the Creek is well known to many, but any individual that has traversed it well knows a sterile spot, where vegetation never sprung, and has probably listened with attentive ear to the sounds of a rushing torrent far beneath his feet, while he stood upon a base of rocks, which, it would seem, had been eternal in their duration.

Beneath this mossy bed of granite the hunter and the Indian guide had sought security.

The morning's sun had found the former quiet and calm in his home—the noonday had found that home a sheet of flame—and the night had found his family all captives, himself little less, subject to the wild and envenomed hatred which the Black Wolf bore toward the white race.

But that night also found his enemy unconsciously sleeping above the very foe he had pursued, without even a fancy that his slumbers might be startled by the unwelcome clamor of war.

Richard Malvers, for such we must call him, had little idea of the companion who was with him, or what he was, yet he knew that companion had evinced a sagacity in eluding the pursuit of his enemies, which demanded his attention and gratitude.

Indeed, it was to the shrewd-sightedness of O-i-chee that he was indebted for the enjoyment of that darling (even of the most unhappy being) *existence*!

"And who is O-i-chee!" he mentally exclaimed, as the Indian gathered together the loose faggots of the cavern and kindled up a fire for their mutual comfort—"And who is O-i-chee? Why that restless, meaning inquiry after the fate of my father, my mother, my brethren and my sisters?"

"Why was it?—his eye looked calm and his nerves were unshaken, but there was that thrill in his voice which startled me like the confusedness of an unwelcome echo!"

"Who is this incomprehensible? I have tendered him naught—given him naught—and when, to-day, he struggled with me in my hour of desolation, I felt that his dwarfish stature was a shackle that bent me to its wearing. What are his purposes?—to betray me? What are his views?—to assassinate me? It can not be! Can it be?"

He sat himself down gloomily upon a jutting rock, and watched with a keen glance the irregular movements of the dwarf, as he gathered the splinters around him to kindle into a blaze the fuel which he designed should cast the chill feeling from their limbs.

The soul of Richard was wrapped up in a thousand reflections as he saw the being before him prepare for his comfort; his form had something about it so unnatural, and his professions had apparently been dictated by kindness; yet he so feared hypocrisy that his gaze was one of most deep and intense interest.

"He does not blanch before me—he evinces no surprise—but I know the Indian never does. What can it be?" and musingly he surveyed the form of his guide, while the fires

of the encampment of the Black Wolf's party glared through the gloom of the clefted rocks, and their reflection came like flickering flashes through the crannies of the rock, which was placed as a barrier to their entrance, in case they should discover the subterranean refuge of the hunter and his guide.

The dwarf was of most irregular proportions, with a form of extraordinary strength and muscle, and yet his height was very little more than four feet, if above that, but he combined agility of action with his movements that would have been truly surprising, for even an amateur in gymnastics to witness.

By this time, this strange compound of the civilized and the savage had, in a dark recess of the cave, produced a glowing, comfortable-looking fire, and also, from a larder, which had not before been observed by his companion, brought forth some social steaks of venison, together with the means requisite for preparing a forester's repast. These things being all arranged, he approached his guest.

"*Brother !*" said he, "will you partake of the Indian's repast?"

Malvers started; there was a thrill came over him at the ejaculation of "*Brother !*" which he had never before experienced, and yet that expression was all of kindness.

"*Brother !*" he rëechoed. "How mean you, strange but less miserable being than you seem? *Brother ?*"

"Ay. *Brother !*" continued the Indian, and he emphasized the word half sardonically—"will you partake of an Indian's fare?"

"*Brother !*" again uttered the hunter, at the same time placing his hand on his rifle. "What demon has enmeshed me?"

And he cocked his piece, preparatory to his defense.

O-i-chee, who had observed his every motion, but without evincing the least feeling of alarm, now passed his hand across the muzzle of the piece, and in a calm tone thus addressed his companion :

"Is it for this, white man, that you threaten the life of your friend—that he has brought you in security from your bitterest enemy's pursuit, and given you an opportunity to rescue the dearest objects of your love from the grasp of a

savage and relentless foe? I ask, is it for this? Will you sacrifice your whole family to the poor, craven fancy of fear?"

"Hold! I will tell you that which your memory cherishes not."

"What is it, then, thou canst tell—wild, untamed, and rude figure of a man?" was the hurried and angry reply of the hunter.

"Didst thou ever see the remaining trunk of a girdled pine, when the tree had fallen? Didst thou ever see the solid rock when the blast had splintered it—each firmly resisting the combinations of efforts to destroy them? I am their effigy—with me Fate has done her worst! I know thee, Richard Malvers, better than thou knowest me!"

"And what is it that thou dost know?"

"More than thou wilt believe—but it is this. I know that the same mother who gave thee birth sorrowed for the loss of me even before thy existence. Dost thou understand me now?"

There was a melancholy tone in the ejaculation of the Dwarf, while he uttered the above, which almost melted the heart of Richard, and faintly he articulated:

"What are you, then?"

"Thy brother, Richard—the lost one thou hast spoken of. I have known thee long—I have known all the designs of the Black Wolf, but my efforts could not counteract them. My plans have been deeply laid—I have drawn him into my trail—he is now in my power—and I now only ask of thee to aid me in rescuing the parents to whom we both owe our existence. Richard, again I ask, dare you—dare you attempt their freedom?"

"I dare—I dare!" was the undesponding reply.

While a world of doubt had buried the hunter in a bewildering maze of incertitude, and he felt all the joy which hope promises in finding a relative so dear as O-i-chee had proclaimed himself, yet he was fearful that the claim of consanguinity was not in reality true.

There was no embrace—there was not even a smile—and the "brothers," both of whom sprung from the same fountain of nature, stood each apart, like the cold statues that arise from the marble of our common mother, earth.

How strangely that cold and perplexing feeling, which sometimes arises from doubt or distrust, rests upon the heart, even when its fountains seem, as it were, boiling over with the contending emotions of love, anxiety, and distrustfulness. Think what we will of affection, it springs not suddenly up, like the morning flower, blushing and spreading its beauties to-day, but like the mountain oak and its aged companions, that knit their limbs together the more firmly as years grow over their duration; yet, like the morning blossom, quick-budding affections often fade and wither away in the sunbeams which produced them, while the embracing oaks fall not at each other's side without marking with desolation the companions of their growth. Affections long tried fall not asunder without a pang—but the uniting ties of consanguinity are never so immovably knit as when they grow from the communion of children.

There was a startling, wild conviction of this, which wove itself, like a web, over the hearts of both the hunter and the Dwarf.

Neither wished to exhibit the first signs of joy, but both felt that the germs of coming happiness were springing up in their bosoms.

The thought is thrilling and deep—but there is something that we can not define—there is something that winds itself about the heart, which human reason can not gather together as the reaper his sheaves—*there is a something which even love shudders at*—and that something was before the Indian and the white man, as they, each with the *feeling of brothers*, but without their kindness, sat themselves down to supply the demands of hunger. But few words passed between them until they had completed their repast.

PART III.

"Now, Richard," said O-i-chee, "now let us up, and look to those we would liberate and preserve. What sort of a piece have you here?"

The distrust before evinced was as deep as ever in the breast of the hunter, and it was with reluctance he permitted the Dwarf to look at his rifle, taking at the same time himself the readiest weapon of defense the Indian had for a like supervision.

But O-i-chee quailed not; his feelings were true, and, with his simple nature, he could not, nor he did not distrust his brother—though that brother had little confidence in him.

"'Tis a fair piece," said the Indian, returning it. "But have you ammunition?"

"I have, I think, sufficient," was the reply.

"Be sure, be sure," continued O-i-chee; "here is an abundance. How heavy does your rifle carry?"

"Ninety to the pound," replied the hunter.

"Ninety, in truth!" rejoined O-i-chee. "Should your arm fail, these are an hundred and twenty-two balls to the charge. Are you ready?"

"I am," sternly but quickly answered Richard.

"I will first ascend," said the Indian, as he removed, with great caution, the stone which had been placed by himself over the mouth of the cave. "I will first ascend; but observe, when following, be careful that you make not the least sound, and our moccasins must be firmly set and lashed before we move."

The midnight hour was fast approaching—the dull red glare of the Black Wolf's fire had died away to the flickering tremulousness of a decaying and incinerated brand—the loud, fitful, or half-breathing sounds of his snoring-startled or quiescent sleepers had for some time fallen upon the wakeful ears of the brothers—and his solitary sentinel, who was to have watched the "coming events" of danger, had, near

the fire, behind the trunk and beneath the outstretched arms of a perennial hemlock, sheltered himself from the whistling blasts, and had lost all consciousness of danger, for the eye that could have overlooked every thing of its nature which surrounded him, was dead in calm and peaceful slumber; but the danger lurked beneath him; he heeded it not, for he knew it not.

The prisoners were closely secured, and the slightest motion might have whelmed them in misery. But, *was it strange?* —THEY, TOO, SLEPT: the father! the mother! and the sister! of those they knew not of—but of those who alike burned with ardor to deliver them from their captors. In a few moments they had both ascended, and, looking eagerly around, they saw that the whole party slept, while their decaying fires cast a glimmer of light on the recumbent groups.

Hastily the Dwarf cut asunder the thongs which connected the captives with the persons of their captors, and fearful lest by awaking them he should lose the advantages which then presented themselves, with caution divested the savages, one by one, of such of their weapons as could be obtained without arousing the sleepers.

The hunter, this while, was not inactive; for, by his well-known voice, he soon found means to awaken his relatives, without having stirred the slumberers who had guarded them, and without noise or bustle they were removed to the secure recesses of the cave.

The Dwarf, in the mean time, was engaged in arranging a slow-match, which should cause an explosion that would arouse and terrify the red-skins almost as soon as his retreat was achieved.

His object was accomplished without accident to himself or friends—but when their foes were aroused by his stratagem, perceiving at the instant that their captives had escaped, and struck with the mystery of the event, their wild, horrid, and startling howl and yell rung like the screamings of ten thousand wolves along the forest, and they fled like frightened deer from their encampment, leaving their very weapons upon the ground.

But then came the deep and thrilling effect of maternal recognition. *The mother knew her child, the son his mother!*

The changes of time had not obliterated recollection, although the recognition was, on the one part, mingled with the cold and distant feelings of distrust.

On the banks of the beautiful Mohawk are yet to be seen the remains of a log-house, where the Dwarf Indian ended his earthly career, and the churchyard tells the tale, by a marble slab, of the rescue of the parents of those who, although brothers, never enjoyed but an indistinct idea of affection, and who parted this life without regret, for want of a communion of feeling in the future world of Spirits. Such are the ties by which Nature binds man together

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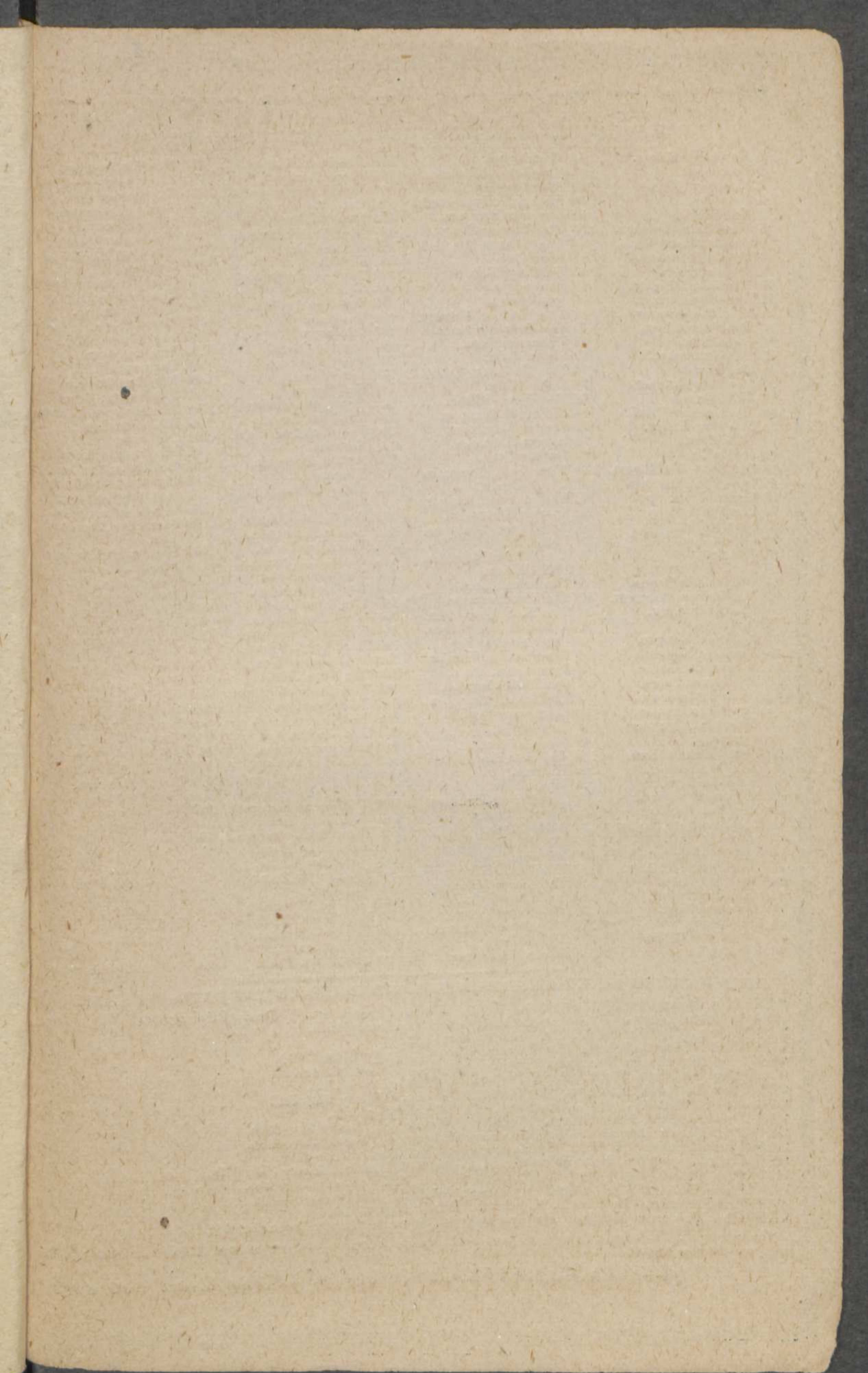
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